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POE AND CROCKETT
WERE HIS FRIENDS.

Colonel Jones, of Texas, at West Point With Great Poet, Talks Interestingly.

HUNTING WITH THE PIONEER

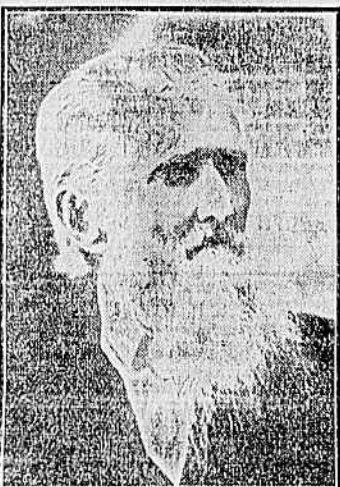
Though a Stripping, Colonel Jones and the Famous "Davy" Were Boon Companions.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch)
SEQUIN, TEXAS, May 21.—Perhaps the only living classmate of Edgar Allan Poe while at West Point is Colonel Timothy Pickering Jones, of this city, a lovable gentleman now in his ninetieth year, still vigorous and with a mind as clear as a man of fifty, delighting in entertaining his friends with reminiscences of the unfortunate poet and another of his boyhood friends, Davy Crockett.

"Edgar Allan Poe has been eulogized, scandalized, admired and defamed," said Colonel Jones, "and as one who knew him intimately I can truthfully say that he was a man of master mind, a loyal friend, and a man who did not hesitate or fear to express his contempt and hatred for an enemy. Poe could hate with the most intense hatred, and there was not a cowardly drop of blood in his veins; he was one of the game men's chickens if ever there was one. Every just man who has read Poe's wonderfully beautiful poems must praise his genius; every fair critic has given him credit in an unstinted measure; but the writer with no feelings of human pity in his heart has delighted in harping on the unfortunate habit which doubtless hastened the untimely end of this truly brilliant genius."

Were Tent Mates.

I entered West Point May 1, 1859, at the same time with Edgar Allan Poe, and we were class-mates and tent-mates—we were "buddies" as the boys say now. Poe was in his twenty-second year, and I in my fifteenth, and confess I felt flattered that the young man would take a fancy to me, a rank-mate friend and comrade. I realized even in my young years that he was an exceptionally brilliant fellow, studying but little, but always perfect in recitations, save in mathematics, which he boldly declared had no place in the brain of an intellectual man—too dull and commonplace. The strict discipline, the mathematical requirements of the military school, kept my friend in an unhappy frame of mind, and when he would get a case of the blues or have a flare-up with one of the professors, he would say, "Come, Pick, let's have ourselves over to 'Old Ben's.' This was a joint where the rankest kind of wet goods went out of the bottles, jugs and kegs to the West Point boys, and I, too, and 'Old Ben's' proved the ruin of many a young fellow. I am glad that the government bought the place and put 'Old Ben's' out of business. Well, when Poe and I would reach that emporium he would pour down drink after drink, and they were no 'ponies,' either, but four and six fingers. It was simply impossible for me to get Poe to consent to return to the buildings until he had satisfied his appetite, until he was thoroughly and capitally sozzled. It was then that I always had my hands full, for Poe in this condition was a reg-



COL. TIMOTHY PICKERING JONES.

ular demon, and would fight a cage of wildcats, and he didn't care much who it was that he met if he could get up a scrap. There was one professor, Dr. Locke, whom Poe delighted in annoying, and he hated him with a holy hatred. Locke did not like Poe, either, and the kettle was kept constantly boiling.

Hypnotic Power.

Poe did not have a very wide circle of acquaintances or friends at West Point—not seeking the companionship but but very few. I confess that he held a strange kind of hypnotic power over me, and I was almost powerless to resist his invitations or requests to slip out by the guards and go with him to Old Ben's. While I knew after the first trip with him just what would happen I could not say no. Drunk or sober Poe was quick to resent a wrong or an insult and his superior intellect, striking personality, and his unquestioned fighting qualities made the boys have a strong respect for him. But he was a marked man, and the teachers and officers determining that he should be brought to bay. On a number of occasions he made Rome bow and it was not until after being forced to straighten out in the guard-house that he would agree to return to his room and conduct himself right. Well, it went from bad to worse until January, 1861—just six months after entering—that he was tried by general court-martial for disobedience to superiors, neglect of duties, and intoxication. There was no necessity for witnesses, for Poe entered a plea of guilty, saying that he was anxious to get out, and that he wasn't cut out for a soldier. The sentence of discharge did not take effect until the 1st of March, and the major portion of this intervening time was utilized by Poe in writing poetry, the greater portion of which was printed in book form, dedicated to the United States Corps of Cadets. But a large batch of the poems didn't get in the volume, they being for private circulation—circulated by being posted in conspicuous places on trees and buildings. These poems were of the bumble-bee variety, very vicious, and were always copied by me at Poe's request. In these he slashed Locke and some of the other teachers and professors in a merciless manner.

LEAVES WEST POINT.

"On the morning of the 6th of March, when Poe was ready to leave West Point, we were in our room together,

and he told me I was one of the few true friends he had ever known, and as we talked the tears rolled down his cheeks. I say candidly that I thought a great deal of the talented young man; I had grown to love him, and I know that he would have risked his life for me. He told me much of his past life, one part of which he said he had confided to no other living soul. This was that while it was generally believed that he had gone to Greece in 1827 to offer his services to assist in the overthrow of the Turk, his opinion is that he had done no such thing; that about as far as Europe as he ever got was Fort Independence, Boston harbor, where he enlisted, and was assigned to Battery H, First Artillery, which was soon afterward transferred to Fortress Monroe, Va. Poe told me that for nearly two years he let his kindred and friends believe that he was fighting with the Greeks, but all the while he was wearing the uniform of Uncle Sam's soldiers, and leading a sober and moral life. So closely had Poe guarded this that after his death both his admirers and traducers in every book, magazine and newspaper spoke of Edgar Allan Poe as continuing the example of Lord Byron, and spending more than three years battling with the Greeks. Even very recent writers have held to this yarn. I did not believe that Poe had told me a falsehood about the enlistment at Boston harbor, but to thoroughly satisfy myself I gathered from the War Department at Washington this data, which is of record and cannot be disputed:

UNDER ASSUMED NAME.

"Edgar Allan Poe, alias E. A. Perry, enlisted at Fort Independence, Boston harbor, May 29, 1827, the enlisting officer, Lieutenant H. G. Glescomb, giving the following description: E. A. Perry, white age 23, height, five feet eight inches; hair, brown; eyes, grey; complexion, fair. Was transferred to Fortress Monroe, Va., with Battery H, First Artillery; was advanced to the non-commissioned staff, having shown ability that attracted attention; later he was made sergeant-major, and was destined to rapid advancement when, on April 14, 1829, he offered a substitute, and was honorably discharged. When the substitute was tendered it became necessary to properly penalize the rascals that 'Edgar Allan' had right name and then it was that the young sergeant-major declared himself Edgar Allan Poe, and his foster father John Allan, of Richmond, Va."

"Now, I do not think it would be easy to dispute these records, and yet Poe kept his secret well. It might be added with every evidence of truth, too, that the chances are that Poe would have remained in the army contented and satisfied had it not been for the death of his adopted mother, Mrs. Allan of Richmond, on the 27th of February, nearly two months before he decided to sever his connection with the army. Poe loved this good woman; he told me so often—and when he learned of her death he immediately quit the service. Poe had his faults, but I loved him, and many his

soul in peace."

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"About myself? There's not much to tell. I was born in Moore County, North Carolina, March 11, 1814, and my father was Atlas Jones, who was regarded as one of the foremost lawyers of that State, and a man of considerable wealth and influence. When I was twelve years of age I moved with my parents to the wilds of Tennessee, Madison county, and there I first met Davy Crockett, and I remember him as the greatest man I ever saw. He was a frequent visitor to my father's home, and they were fast friends, being of the same political faith. About the time we landed in Tennessee Crockett was in the hardest part of a political campaign, and I richly enjoyed hearing him and father talking over how they would down the other side. And they did, too. It was my pleasure to know him well, and I often paid considerable attention to my father at his home in Obion county, and many a fine hunt we have had together. Of course Crockett was a grown man and I only a stripling of a lad, but we were fast friends, all the same."

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BRISTOL PEOPLE.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.)
BRISTOL, VA., May 21.—A delightful reception was given at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. McCue on Tuesday afternoon. The house was decked out in its best, having decorated with early spring wild flowers and evergreens. The many guests who enjoyed the afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. McCue were received by the following ladies: Mrs. McCue, Mrs. Wilbur Sevier, Mrs. J. P. Davis. Assisting in the dining room were: Mrs. W. K. Vance, Mrs. E. A. Burson, Mrs. W. F. Rhea, Mr. Samuel Campbell, Mrs. F. B. Pond, Mrs. Dede Mrs. Patton, and Miss Branch Keebler.

On Wednesday evening, June 1, Miss Inez Cowan, a pretty and popular daughter of Mr. James R. Cowan, agent for The Southern Railway Company, will come to Bristol this week to visit her parents. The department is sending him to the Mexican border of Texas where he will be located for awhile.

Miss Nell Wade, who has been in school at the Jonesville Institute, Jonesville, Va., stopped here en route to her home at Johnson City, to be the guest of Miss Ruby Hobson.

Mr. John Parlett, of Baltimore, was the guest this week of his brother, Mr. Albert Parlett.

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Kidd, of Kenova, W. Va., were guests of Bristol relatives this week. Miss Clara Kidd, who was born at Kenova, has returned to the same home here.

Among the patrons of Virginia Institute who were here during the week to attend the commencement were: Mr. A. R. Johnson, of Johnson City; Maj. J. S. Crump, of Morristown; Mr. and Mrs. R. C. Thomas, of Jonesboro; Mrs. G. W. Lyle, of Radford; Mrs. L. W. Davis, of Knoxville; Rev. W. A. Pearson, of Lebanon; Va.; Rev. S. H. Thompson, of Bluefield; W. Va.; Rev. and Mrs. M. R. Cooper, of Radford, Va.; Mrs. E. F. Brown, of Hetherope, and Rev. W. C. Price, of Mendota, Va.

Miss Matilda Powell has returned from Brevard, N. C., where she spent the winter months and will spend the summer with her sister, Mrs. R. R. Earkhart.

Mr. A. H. Ordway has returned from New England, where he spent a few weeks at his former home.

Misses Dorothy Cure and Miss Amy Ward, of Johnson City, were guests of Miss Cure's father, Mr. John W. Cure, one day this week.

Miss Georgia Slack, who was quite sick for two or three weeks, has about recovered, but will not resume her school work during the rest of the present session.

Ramsay Family Reunion.
The Ramsay family, including all persons who bear the name "Ramsay," or "Ramsey," will hold a reunion in the Kansas building at the World's Fair, St. Louis, Mo., on August 26th, 1904.

Additional circulars and information will be sent to all persons of the name who will address J. A. Ramsay, Topeka, Kansas.

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